

# Montana Laboratory Sentinel



Updates from the MT Laboratory Services Bureau  
800-821-7284 [www.lab.hhs.mt.gov](http://www.lab.hhs.mt.gov)

12/16/2011

Happy  
Holidays



## MTPHL HAS CAPACITY TO FIND NOVEL INFLUENZA VIRUSES

CDC recently confirmed two cases of human infection with two different novel influenza A viruses in different states (West Virginia and Minnesota) that are related to swine influenza viruses, even though there were no reports of direct or close contact with swine. Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs, however, sporadic human infections with swine flu also occur. From December 2005 through December 2011, there were 33 cases of human infection with swine influenza reported to CDC. Although the vast majority of human infections with swine influenza viruses do not result in person-to-person transmission, these cases are fully investigated.

The Montana Public Health Laboratory (MTPHL) performs influenza testing using the FDA approved *CDC Human Influenza Virus Real-time RT-PCR Detection and Characterization Panel* which includes markers that detect swine origin influenza viruses and possible viral reassortments. Through influenza specimens submitted by clinical laboratories and sentinel providers in Montana, MTPHL has the ability to detect cases of unusual or novel influenza viruses that can then be referred to CDC for confirmation and characterization. The partnership between clinical laboratories, providers, the public health laboratory, and epidemiology assures that the public health laboratory system can sound the alarm should a novel influenza virus develop the ability to transmit person-to-person, which becomes particularly important for a strain with high morbidity and mortality.

## THE UNTOLD STORY OF E.COLI

*E.coli* are bad, right? Wrong! Most *E.coli* are friendly, and some are even beneficial to you. [Check out this new publication](#) by the American Society of Microbiology entitled "*E.coli*: Good, Bad, & Deadly." Aimed at the general public, the report explains the role of *E.coli* in human health, in food, and our understanding of our own biology.



## COOKIE DOUGH *E. COLI* RISK

The latest perpetrator of shiga-toxin producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC), a

significant cause of bacterial gastrointestinal illness, is ready-to-bake commercial prepackaged cookie dough. The discovery was made following the 2009 investigation of a nationwide (USA) outbreak of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*. A new study, published online and in *Clinical Infectious Diseases* describes the outbreak and provides suggestions to prevent the bacteria in a strong message for consumers: Pre-packaged cooking dough must not be eaten before baking.

Read more [here](#).

The Communicable Disease Epidemiology Section  
may be reached 24/7 at (406) 444-0273.

CD-Epi Data can be found at:

<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/PHSD/epidemiology/commun-disease-epi-reporting.shtml>